

REMARKS

Claims 1-2 and 5-10 are pending for further examination. Claims 3 and 4 have been canceled.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claims 3 and 4. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully request entry of these amendments.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-2, 5-6 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0017816 (Ishwar et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 2003/0133412 (Iyer et al.).

Claims 3-4 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the Ishwar et al. application in view of the Iyer et al. application and U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0138628 (Tingley et al.).

Claim 1

As indicated above, claim 1 has been amended and now recites that “the MPLS table item managing module establishes a *correspondence relation of the forwarding-relation table item and a corresponding egress port and physical MAC address in the table item of ARP.*” In contrast, the Tingley et al. application does not disclose this feature. Instead, the Tingley et al. application discloses mapping “an IP address to an Ethernet address.” See paragraph 0010. This differs from the “correspondence relation of the forwarding-relation table item and a corresponding egress port and physical MAC address in the table item of ARP.” As such, the Tingley et al. application does not disclose this feature.

Claim 1 also recites “if there is no corresponding table item of ARP, the MPLS table item managing module marks the forwarding-relation table item with an UNAVAILABLE sign.” In contrast, the Tingley et al. application does not disclose this feature. Instead, the Tingley et al. application discloses that “each Virtual Networking Device maintains a separate list of

'unresolved' ARP mappings, consisting of IP addresses for which ARP requests have not yet been received." (See paragraph 0014). The Tingley et al. application discloses that the "unresolved" ARP mappings correspond to ARP requests that are sent but no response is received. This is different from marking the forwarding-relation table item with an UNAVAILABLE sign because the UNAVAILABLE sign indicates that there is no corresponding table item of ARP that corresponds to the next-hop IP address (see paragraph 43 of the Specification). The UNAVAILABLE sign does not indicate that the response to the ARP request has not yet been received. As such, the Tingley et al. application does not disclose this feature.

In addition, claim 1 recites that the MPLS table item managing module "*relearns and obtains the egress port and MAC address* corresponding to the next-hop IP address based upon the received ARP response message sent from the opposite end" and "*update[s] the information of the egress port corresponding to the forwarding-relation table item based upon the received ARP information.*" This allows the MPLS table to relearn and update the information related to the egress port corresponding to the forwarding-relation table item when no corresponding table item of ARP is found. In contrast, the Tingley et al. application does not disclose this feature. Although the Tingley et al. application discloses that "each Virtual Networking Device maintains a separate translation table," the Tingley et al. application does not disclose relearning and obtaining the egress port and MAC address that corresponds to the next-hop IP address or updating egress port information that corresponds to the forwarding-relation table item based upon the received ARP information.

The Office action acknowledges that the foregoing claimed features are not disclosed in the Ishwar et al. application and the Iyer et al. application. In addition, the Ishwar et al. application and the Iyer et al. application, by themselves or in combination with the Tingley et al. application, do not render obvious the claimed subject matter.

In light of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1.

The dependent claims should be patentable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1. Furthermore, the dependent claims recite additional features that make those claims independently patentable.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,



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